

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Monday, May 4, 2009
7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in Open Session at 7:00 pm by Chair Leclerc in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Jones and Firenze were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

Ms. Anne Mahon, Town Meeting member from Precinct 4 and Butler PTA member, appeared before the Board to request that the Board of Selectmen consider placing an operating override on the ballot. She spoke about the losses to the town: elementary school library aides, police officers, fire fighters, etc. She requested that the Board give the residents the choice to vote on a \$1M override. If that is not possible, she suggested that the Board use \$1M from free cash to reinstate the losses. Chair Leclerc noted that this issue has been given a lot of thought and the Board as well as the Warrant Committee and School Committee has decided not to place an override on the ballot this year. He said that free cash would be held over to help with next year's anticipated budget shortfalls – e.g., state aid could be cut.

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

Police Department – Awards Ceremony

Chief of Police McLaughlin appeared before the Board to present awards to recognize numerous police officers. Assistant Chief Lane acknowledged Belmont's Auxiliary Police Officers who have volunteered service hours to the town. He noted that these individuals have saved the town over \$58,000. Two civilians were honored for assisting the police force. Life Saving Awards and Chief's Commendation Awards were given to many officers. A Medal of Valor was awarded to Officer Leary for extraordinary valor.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS (continued)

High school student Max Ke appeared before the Board and asked what the Board thought would happen in town and schools without an override. Chair Leclerc said that core services are being preserved as a result of the stimulus funding that was received and that, next year, an operating override may be placed on the ballot.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

- A 40R development proposal has been received by the Planning Department for the former Our Lady of Mercy properties.
- Mr. Younger thanked the School Committee for approving the fireworks display to take place on the school fields on June 11, 2009.
- The Springwell services survey deadline is May 15. Mr. Younger should have the results by the end of May.
- Rec Department numbers for the Spring ball leagues have been received; there are a good number of participants.
- Mr. Younger asked about changing the start time of Town Meeting from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm. He stated that this could save the town money. Selectman Firenze suggested that the Moderator poll TM members at the June 1st meeting to receive their input.
- The Alcohol Beverage Control Commission is holding hearings for Kashish and Asai for allegedly selling alcohol to underage residents during a sting operation. This is a routine process and the Town does not need to take any action.
- The Belmont Education Association has filed an “unfair labor” complaint as a result of the PPO health premium change to 50%. Selectman Firenze noted that this move by the BEA is not a surprise and that the BEA had been appropriately notified. Chair Leclerc noted that the town had no other choice and was generous in extending the effective date until July 1st.
- Mr. Younger asked if the Board wanted him to look into energy reduction efforts over the summer, for instance longer weekday hours for reduced hours on Friday afternoons. The Board commented that cost savings are an interest, but must be balanced against the delivery of services and the perception that town employees are not working appropriate hours. The Board discussed the closing of Town Hall for cost savings.
- The Senior Center Building Committee is intending to put out to bid a contract to supply furniture for the new Beech Street Center.
- Belmont Second Soccer fields look wonderful with the new grass. Mr. Younger noted that the town will supply water to the fields. Selectman Firenze spoke to the possibility of “digging wells” to help in watering the fields at less of a cost to the town.

Legal Report Review

Selectman Firenze suggested that the Legal Report list be reviewed so that people would know why the town employs a Legal Counsel. He reviewed the items that Legal Counsel has been working on. Mr. Conti noted that there was an additional “slip and fall” case, but that there is no action on that case. He added that the town is being aggressive in reducing its legal costs. The Board discussed various “pot hole” claims.

ACTION BY CONSENT

[There was none.]

ACTION BY WRITING

Approval of Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Board moved: To approve the special Town Meeting Warrant.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Approval of Special June Election

Chair Leclerc read the Article regarding the June 8th Special Election as it pertains to the Wellington School debt exclusion. Mr. Conti noted that the wording is in the appropriate format and has been approved by Town Counsel.

The Board moved: To approve the Special Election for June 8th.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Renewal License for “Fancy That”, 4 Trapelo Road, and Renewal License for “All That Matters”, 400 Trapelo Road

The Board moved: To accept the license renewals of “Fancy That” and “All That Matters”.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Waverley Woods LLC – Agreement Subordinated Loans

The Board discussed the loan agreement.

The Board moved: To accept the loan agreement.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

40B - Subsidized Housing Inventory Calculation

Mr. Younger explained that the town of Norton is requesting support to amend the DHCD regulations regarding the status of affordable housing units. The Board discussed this issue.

The Board moved: To support Norton’s initiative.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

OTHER

- The Board discussed issues relating to the halt of the Freedom Commons development at McLean, particularly pertaining to PILOT payments.

- Additional topics put forward by Selectman Firenze:
 - The Board ought to be recognizing volunteers for their contributions to the town. Mr. Younger said that this could be included in the Proclamation Process at Town Meeting.
 - Letters that come through the Board of Selectmen's Office ought to be responded to with a reply to the sender indicating that the Board has seen the letter and that it has been referred to the appropriate department for response. This includes cases where the issues do not concern the Board.
 - Stimulus Guidance – Selectman Jones said that the full regulations are not yet known. He has advised the SC to proceed cautiously.
 - Selectman Firenze suggested that the Light Department should update the Board on its substation site project. Mr. Younger will schedule a Light Board meeting.
 - Government Structure Review Committee – Mr. Younger said this committee will come back to the Board in May for a final presentation.
 - Climate Action Plan Report – The Board needs to know what is being requested of it and how to enforce, stated Selectman Firenze. The Board discussed issues related to the report, e.g., potential by-law changes. Mr. Younger will see what other communities have done with regard to Climate Action Plan Report recommendations.
 - Building Committee discussion – The Board will request that the Moderator officially appoint Mr. Barrell as the Board's liaison to the Wellington Building Committee. Selectman Firenze said that there is an engineer employed by the town (Mr. Ara Yogurtian) who could be appointed to provide expertise on engineering issues on building committees. Selectman Firenze would like Mr. Yogurtian's job description to be revised to include "working with building committees to review the building process". There are costly mistakes, he said, that could have been prevented if an engineer had been on site giving feedback. Selectman Firenze said he would like the Board's approval to have this person appointed to look out for the taxpayers' interests.

The Board moved: To give Mr. Younger the authority to discuss with Mr. Clancy and Mr. Yogurtian the possibility of adding building committee responsibilities to Mr. Yogurtian's job description and come back to the Board with a recommendation.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 pm.

Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator